

# California Native Plant Society



*Sacramento Valley Chapter  
Stockton Sub-chapter*

*November 2004  
Vol. 53*



The end of another wildflower season brings a sense of sadness but one of hope for the next that we may find our quests undiscovered this year in the next. The adventure will always continue as we discover new flowers and new knowledge of our old friends. The end of this summer happened to be quite 'ducky'...

## NEXT MEETING:

Date: Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Lois and Bob Davis' residence  
4531 Augustus Court  
Stockton, CA [477-8353]  
(Northwest of Stagg High)



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sandhill Crane Festival

Lodi, CA. November 6 & 7.

We will have a display booth. If you can help staff the booth for a couple hours between 10am & 4pm, Saturday or Sunday, please call 477-3966.

## INSPIRATION POINT

*by Martha Mallory*

Inspiration Point is practically any spot atop the volcanic mountain that borders the south side of Lake Alpine. It was shortly after noon when David, Flower (the dog) and I started around the lake heading for the trail that led up to it. Flower was carrying some frozen chocolate milk in her saddlebag for Bob, who wanted to sleep in and meet with us later. Since Bob was going on to Tahoe that night, he need to drive his own car anyway.

We soon left the lodgepole pines (*Pinus contorta* ssp. *murrayana*), grasses and monkeyflowers (*Mimulus* sp.) of the shoreline and headed up the steep slope to Inspiration Point. The trail switchbacked under red firs (*Abies magnifica*) and around trees downed by lightning. We finally arrived at a huge clearing where part of the mountaintop had come crashing down. Volcanic boulders, smaller rocks and gravel were the homes for myriads of onions (*Allium* sp.) that a few weeks earlier had perfumed the hill with their scent.

Resting in the shade on the other side of the clearing, we watched as Bob came huffing and puffing toward us from his nonstop charge up the hill. By that time, Flower (the dog) was too tired to greet him with the usual barking she directed at non-dog people. And even Bob seemed touched when he learned she was carry8ing a surprise for him. Was a truce developing?

A short hike up to the saddle and we could see forever... Union and Utica Reservoirs, the Dardanelles near Sonora Pass and beyond.

Immediately to the east rose a wall of elongated rock faces, carved over the centuries by countless storms. On hands and knees we climbed up the exposed roots of a lone Jeffrey Pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) and through the brushlike huckleberry oak (*Quercus vaccinifolia*) until we were atop the sentinel faces.

Then, slipping in volcanic scree, we made our way to a final rock wall and climbed the last six feet to the mountaintop. An inspiration rivaling that of the view greeted us. There were myriads of mariposa lilies (*Calochortus leichtlinii*) growing bravely in the dry, volcanic gravel. They were spaced on the mountaintop like stars in the constellations, tempting us to make "dippers" and "horses" of them all. Frequent thunderstorms were undoubtedly their secret to survival.

From the end of Inspiration Point, we could look down on Duck Lake, hundreds of feet below, our destination earlier in the summer.

Bob thanked Flower for his chocolate mild and began capturing on film the composites, paintbrush and that graced the mountaintop. There were also a few western white pines (*Pinus monticola*), lodgepoles and hemlocks (*Tsuga mertensiana*) for David's delight.

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As we headed back down, Flower adamantly refused to climb down the steep wall to get off the top. Possibly mellowed by her gift, Bob backed up to the wall, and gripping her paws on his shoulders, lifted her down piggyback onto the ground. Oh, for a picture of that! Was a friendship developing?

We descended slowly, listening for forest fauna as the shadows of the setting sun climbed up the mountain toward us. Bob went his way to Lake Tahoe. David, Flower and I headed back to Stockton after another inspiring day.



## *Duck Lake*

*by Grover Bethards*

The Stockton Chapter of the CNPS went on a field trip to Duck Lake on July 5, 2004. We were supposed to go on Friday, the 2nd, but weather reports of rain and lightning changed our minds.

Duck Lake is located just past Lake Alpine off Highway 4 in Alpine County.

Martha, David and I picked a most beautiful day to go. As we drove up to the mountains, we left the dry, golden-brown grass for more lush mountain meadows.

We parked on the east end of Lake Alpine and walked to Duck Lake, approximately 2 miles, after Martha drew a map for some other hikers.

The trail to the lake is easy walking - - first up over the hill, then down to the lake. As we strolled up the trail, we saw numerous flowers: wandering daisies, lupine, violets, butterweed, mustang clover, monkey-flower, spotted coralroot, some composites and, of course, many different "Bob" flowers (ultrasmall). On the ridge were beautiful white Mariposa lilies with their center markings of brown and yellow. One can almost see the faces of animals in them.

## *Orthilia* sp. "Sidebells"



On both sides of the trail were more colors - - gooseberries in bloom, some with berries.

We stopped on "Inspiration Rock" and took in the breathtaking scenery. The Dardanelles loomed in the distance with small amounts of snow here and there. Blue skies with small white clouds were forming in the backdrop.

Near the bottom of the trail under the dense red fir forest canopy was a profusion of snow plants, some in groups of 20 or more!

When you round the corner, the lake comes into full view. A sea of flowers - - penstemon, lupine and lilies. Three old cabins were nestled among the myriads of flowers. One cabin, in such a state of disrepair, had fallen.

The lake is shallow and clear with catfish swimming near the shore. And a profusion of dragonflies darted here and there.

We stopped for lunch near a grove of old quaking aspen - - marred by initials of new and old passersby. The moist, swampy area around the lake was white with flowers - - western bistort. Martha said that we might spy a Newberry's gentian but to no avail.

There was a helicopter flying to the lake for water that would come back again and again. Later we heard it was putting out small fires started by lightning.

As Martha and David wandered and enjoyed the clean air and sights, I walked down to the Stanislaus River. The hike was mostly under a canopy of trees following a small creek for awhile. There were several small ponds with water bugs and some minnows, with

all sorts of insects flying about. As I dropped down toward the river you could hear the water before you could see it. Along its bank was an array of bushes and trees. Some large groups of Sierra tiger lilies lined the water, with nodding crimson columbine and lush lupine growing side by side.

Returning to the lake, I didn't see Martha or David, so thinking they had gone back to the truck, I returned to the truck. however, no one was there. So I headed back to the lake where I saw them coming up the trail. I hid and decided to give them a fright. Well, it worked. When I growled and raked the tree, Martha yelled out and David said "Oh, sh\*t!" Not wanting to scare them further, I tossed a small stick toward them and they immediately knew who it was.

We saw many wonderful flowers that day. I'm sorry we didn't see the gentian, but maybe next time?

Achillea millefolium - yarrow  
Allium sp. - wild onion  
Aquilegia formosa - crimson columbine  
Calochortus leichtlini - mariposa lily, Leichtlin's mariposa tulip  
Cornus canadensis - bunchberry  
Dodecatheon sp. - shooting star  
Erigeron peregrinus - wandering daisy  
Eriogonum sp. - wild buckwheat  
Lilium parvum - alpine lily, sierra tiger lily  
Linanthus montanus - mustang clover  
Mimulus bicolor - yellow and white monkeyflower  
Polygonum bistortoides - western bistort  
Potentilla sp. - cinquefoil  
Pyrola picta - white-veined wintergreen  
Ranunculus sp. - buttercup  
Sarcodes sanguinea - snow plant  
Senecio sp. - butterweed  
Silene sp. - catchfly  
Smilacina sp. - false Solomon's seal  
Triteleia ixioides ssp. anilina - pretty face  
Veratrum californicum - corn lily  
Viola adunca - western dog violet  
Viola macloskeyi - Macloskey's violet  
Viola nuttallii - Nuttall's violet

*Gentiana newberryi*  
Alpine gentian



*Alpine gentian*

Editor's Note:

Well, as the season wore on, we made yet another trip to Duck Lake and lo and behold found our long sought-after Alpine Gentian (*Gentiana newberryi*). At the same time Bob found a fungal gem around the lake, a large white puffball covered with pyramidal white plates. The weather was perfect for our last visit to the lake and after finding our prey we were able to move on to other conquests.

# California Native Plant Society



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Striped coralroot  
*Corallorhiza striata*

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photo by Bob Stahmer